



SENATE STATE OF LOUISIANA

NEIL RISER

State Senator
District 32
P.O. Box 117
Columbia, LA 71418
Phone: (318) 649-0977
Toll-Free: (866) 513-8699
Fax: (318) 649-0979

COMMITTEES:

Labor & Industrial Relations, Chairman
Agriculture
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Select Committee on Homeland Security
Select Committee on Veterans Affairs
Capital Outlay

May 16, 2011

Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554-0005

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Rural telecommunications issues are of utmost importance to me both as a business owner and as a member of the Louisiana State Senate. My attention has been drawn to what I understand is one of the Federal Communications Commission's goals: the expansion of internet service to rural areas. While I whole-heartedly agree with that objective, my concern is the methods used to accomplish it may reduce the support given to cell phone coverage, particularly in rural Louisiana.

This causes me great concern for the people of my district, which encompasses one-tenth of Louisiana's land mass and covers the entireties or large portions of ten rural parishes along the Mississippi River. Telecommunications service is critical to these citizens, most of whom work in agriculture and forestry and many of whom travel long distances to work in mills or plants.

Regional and small carriers have been instrumental in providing quality coverage and service, which they may not have been able to do without critical financial support from the Universal Services Fund. Any restrictions on the use of that assistance could limit coverage and impact rural Louisianans both from a communications and a public safety standpoint.

My hope is that you find a solution that will allow the current cell phone systems to continue receiving support from the Universal Services Fund and expand that service coverage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Neil Riser", written over a horizontal line.

Neil Riser

cc: Michael J. Copps, Commissioner